

THE RELUCTANT INTERNATIONALIST

— An Editorial

THE
Commonwealth



**ANTI-SEMITISM
ON THE LEFT**

Will Herberg

THE DOCKS: COPS AND ROBBERY

John C. Cort

THE POET FROM GALESBURG

Nicholas Joost

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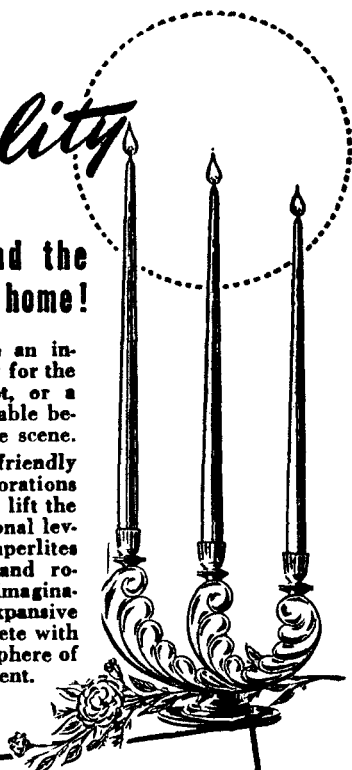
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THE Commonweal

week by week

THE RELUCTANT INTERNATIONALISTS

THERE was a popular song of a few years ago which suggested that "life gets tedjus, don't it?" In describing our foreign affairs since the war, one wonders if tedious is not the right word: a tedium that comes from an overabundance of excitement. And from the tedium comes a profound desire to get it all over with: to drop an H-Bomb, or do something equally final.

When Mr. John Foster Dulles walks into the State Department and places his hat on the executive hatrack for the first time, the world will wait to see if it is to be more tedium, or the big explosion.

Fortunately, the big-explosion (or universal-solvent) school of political thought is reported not to include Mr. Dulles, and has decreased among Republicans in general since the days of the campaign. The Republican members of Congress, those noted for long seniority and short patience, have manfully pledged support for the Eisenhower-Dulles foreign policy. And although their recent statements and interviews plainly show a nostalgia for the past, there is reason to believe that when Eisenhower says there is no easy solution in Korea, they will follow him and support the hard solutions that Mr. Dulles will be proposing.

But if their loyalty is pledged to party internationalism, their emotions are wedded to protectionism and, to a degree, to Herbert Hoover's remodeled isolationism. These are the well-meaning people who will threaten internationalist policies most during the coming months, and will find it quite practical to advocate Republican foreign cooperation at the same time that they are "re-examining" international-aid expenditures and refusing to lower tariffs.

Dulles will find his deepest intra-party conflict in the fact that there is, after all, in a broad sense, no alternative to containment—except war, and, as CBS's correspondent Alexander Kendrick recently pointed out, the Iron Curtain peoples want freedom, but not at the expense of martyrdom. So with us all. The policies Dulles puts forth cannot help but be essentially the same as those of the Acheson-

Truman years. The best that can be done is to bring imagination and a reinvigorated spirit to those policies, and then we must all hope that the GOP's reluctant internationalists will find enough "change" in changed emphasis to win their support.

FIRST of all, Mr. Dulles faces the crucial matter of Western unity, which has taken a bad beating recently. The Communist line in France and Germany aims to promote Western disagreement. British distrust of America is primarily a distrust of what we may do in the Far East. French difficulties are centered around Indochina, and the problem of bringing Germany into NATO and the European Union is centered, in turn, on France. If we can mount international support of the French in Indochina, and give the Indochinese greater self-government now and assurance of independence (negotiations which would call for Mr. Dulles' highest talents), we will have steadied Europe immensely. The new State Department must step into this crisis immediately, for it has been postponed too long.

Secondly, we must formulate with Australasia, India, Pakistan, Japan and the smaller free nations of the Far East, a joint assistance and cooperation program which will convince the Asians that Western concepts of freedom are not for Western peoples alone. We once had a reservoir of good will in that part of the world, but the postwar colonial efforts of France, our vacillation on China and Communist propaganda on Korea have drained much of that.

The much-abused Point Four program is the key to Asian-American friendship, and Mr. Dulles faces still another problem in convincing his fellow-Republicans of that fact. Scholarships for promising young Asians is another, underemphasized, facet of the situation. The Asians need education in political affairs and science. We need Asian leaders who have seen the best as well as the worst of America.

Finally, at home we must reduce our tariffs and make our economic preachings to the Europeans

square with our domestic practices. We must get rid of the unjust McCarran act, and fight the spirit which conceived it.

Here, as throughout the problems Mr. Dulles takes up, the solution lies as much at home as abroad. And Mr. Dulles may very likely find his schizoid party almost as difficult as the paranoiac Soviets. We wish him a successful term of office; it would be futile to wish him a pleasant one.

THE NEW CONGRESS

THE chances are that the early sessions of the 83rd Congress will provide the electorate with such instruction on the workings of our government as they have not had in many months. The chief teachers will be the newly ensconced chairmen of important Senate and House Committees, men who through seniority and solid backing from their local constituencies over the years have been named to posts where they can act almost as they will on bills that are proposed.

One way of putting it is to describe the majority of these leaders in both houses as conservative mid-western Republicans; another is to dub them as Taft men, for whom Ike was not the candidate of their choice. A third is to view their power in conjunction with the dominant coalition between Northern Republicans and Southern Democrats—or, to bring things down to cases, the possibility that anything agreed to between Taft of Ohio and Russell of Georgia is certain to go through.

To balance all this is the new President's tremendous initial prestige, his renown as a conciliator and the tradition of giving a new President his head for his first three months. Moreover, Democrats from all sectors tend to be internationalist; like-minded Republicans are numerous enough to assure

support for the sort of foreign policy credited to the new Chief Executive.

In domestic matters, collaboration between the parties works in a contrary direction. The conservatism and economizing proclivities of the new Administration will find no stauncher supporters than the Southern Democrats. With committee chairmen of the stamp chosen in a position completely to dominate the legislative play, the direction of impending acts of Congress is unmistakable.

How will such an attack on our national problems meet the realities of the world in which we live? Take the matter of finance. Expenses forecast for the coming fiscal year will run to eighty billions, three-fourths of them for national defense. Income will fall ten billions short of this figure. Yet the new Congress is setting out both to cut taxes and balance the national budget.

Before the spring is out, Congress will also have to do something about renewing, in current or modified form, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements program. On the one hand are the needs of our principal allies and the international-mindedness of the new President, on the other the shortsightedness of various manufacturing and commodity interests, which have most of the key leaders in Congress on their side.

How much contention there will be between the President and Congress on such matters as defense expenditures and foreign trade remains uncertain. If the differences prove to be too great to be conciliated, which will have the greater weight, the tremendous personal mandate of Dwight Eisenhower—far and above the votes registered for the other Republican candidates—or the influential Congressional committee chairmen who now find themselves placed in unparalleled seats of power? What hope there is, for the first months at least, is that the new President will prevail.

NEXT WEEK

JAMES MCBRIDE DABBS discusses the prevalence of loneliness here in the United States and certain of its results.

"We devour the confession magazines and gorge ourselves upon the life of Hollywood. Not only must we sit down beside the others and rub shoulders with them; we must also lift the mask of their lives and probe their innermost secrets. We will permit no reserve, either in them or in ourselves. Reticence has become a lost virtue, 'keep your distance' an unuttered warning. By whatever means, distance must be annihilated."

"COMMUNIST-THINKERS," ETC.

NOT many years ago, in certain American circles, a man was never sure when his opinion might be branded as "fascist" and he would be sent running for cover. Anyone who had dealings with American Communists and fellow-travelers during their years of grace in American life remembers how often, and how effectively, this kind of argument-by-label was used.

In those days the real fascists were the international villains; the word was enough to suggest all kinds of unspoken horrors. In this left-wing context, a "fascist" was anyone who dared to disagree with the Communists and their camp followers. If

one was an "interventionist" during the Hitler-Stalin pact, for instance, he was clearly a "fascist."

In the era of the cold war, "fascist" has lost much of its old power to evoke the reaction which in those days hopelessly blurred central questions while "anti-fascist" and accused "fascist" engaged in semantic swordplay. These days it is enough to whisper the word "Communism," or "liberalism" (quotes around this word are deemed the coup de grace) to get the same kind of easy victory for one's point of view. Question a program or a specific proposal and it will not be long before you hear it suggested that you are a "pinko," a "Communist-thinker," or even a "pseudo-intellectual." By the rules of the game, it is enough merely to pronounce these words. Once they have been used to describe your viewpoint, the battle is over and, brother, your side lost.

In order to call a man a Communist, it may be embarrassingly necessary to establish an actual connection with the Communist Party. But just by substituting "liberal" or "Communist-thinker" this difficulty can be overcome. "Liberals" and "Communist-thinkers" are easy to find: they are everywhere—they are, in fact, just about everyone who dares to disagree with you.

Senator McCarthy has announced that he is getting ready to make a full-scale investigation of "Communist-thinkers" in the nation's colleges and universities. What will be the Senator's standards for thinking like a Communist? It will be recalled that in the Senator's mind Adlai Stevenson, for instance, qualifies as a "Communist-thinker." Presumably, if the recent Presidential candidate were a professor in an American university he would be a prime example of the kind of thinker Senator McCarthy is after. Only a few months ago Mr. McCarthy expressed the opinion that he could make a "good American" out of Stevenson if he were permitted to club the Governor into an orthodox (that is, a McCarthy) frame of mind.

Senator McCarran (whose new Immigration Bill has been widely criticized by many outstanding citizens, including Archbishop Cushing, Monsignor John O'Grady and officials of the Protestant National Council of Churches) described the bill's critics as "out-and-out Reds," aided and abetted by "pinks, misguided liberals and demagogues." And what man in his right mind, the Senator clearly implied, would be taken in by people like that?

So it goes. If the trend toward semantic politics continues, soon it will no longer be necessary to carry on those elaborate debates which have consumed so much of America's time and effort since the Republic was founded. Opinions and viewpoints can be stamped, like slabs of beef, as either fit or unfit for consumption. Just as in Communist coun-

tries there is a clear-cut difference between the "Marxist" (the true, the good and the beautiful) and the "bourgeois" (or tainted), so we can drop our old-fashioned preoccupation with essences and settle differences with efficiency and dispatch by merely checking the labels.

THE KAUFMAN CONTROVERSY

THE controversy over George F. Kaufman's place on "This Is Show Business" is not a question of whether or not one likes "Silent Night, Holy Night." Nor is it one of whether or not one cares for the type of sardonic humor which is Mr. Kaufman's stock-in-trade. The question is, rather, the basic one of free expression in our society.

For if a man is to be economically penalized every time he says something controversial or "offensive" then we might as well drop all pretense to freedom of speech in the United States. We might as well forget about speech, in fact, and be content to exist as a nation of unoffended, uncontroversial vegetables.

Such a future is apparently one to which the American Tobacco Company is willing to consign us, for it hastily dropped Mr. Kaufman from its program after receiving a few hundred letters protesting his "controversial" remark. That the Columbia Broadcasting System is not so easily intimidated and promises to restore Kaufman to his place as soon as it takes over the program's sponsorship is a hopeful reassurance that the era of vegetable culture is not yet completely upon us.

THE POPE'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

A CHRISTMAS Eve talk by the Pope, which is broadcast in many languages to the whole world, has become one of the established features of the season. These addresses always call for careful study; this year Pope Pius has crammed so much into a six-thousand-word message that scholars are likely to be debating over the exact application of his various points for months to come.

Such interpretation is never an easy task; the Pope necessarily speaks in broad terms, in an effort to make his points as applicable in Africa as in Arizona. Thus the task of making specific application of the principles enunciated by the Pope is necessarily left to Catholics in the various countries, whose function it is to bridge the gap between principle and practice.

On occasions such as a Christmas address by the Pope, the tendency in the secular press is to treat

his words as "hot copy." And because of the stress placed by the Pope on certain points, these talks often are just that. But it is a mistake to treat such messages as if they were somehow apart from the general current of Catholic social thought. There will normally be variations from year to year in the emphasis and importance given to different points by the Pope, but those who turn to such documents for a radical departure from previous pronouncements will look in vain.

Thus the Papal message this year sounded certain fundamental notes. The special place of the poor in the Christian tradition was strongly emphasized, and, as always in Christian social thought, the key concepts of the dignity of the human person and of the common good were stressed, with special attention being paid to the former. At Christmas the Pope seized the opportunity to remind a suffering world that salvation cannot proceed from "production and organization alone," and to call attention to "that phenomenon which is submerging modern man under its tide of anguish: his depersonalization."

In its general attitude on the problems of the world, the Papal address reflects that essentially sacramental approach that is characteristic of Christianity. In this view, man is always, under God, the center of the universe. All things are here to minister unto him and to help him in achieving his supernatural destiny, and he is, therefore, always what the Pope calls the "subject and not the object of social relations."

As a result of this basic orientation, the attitude of the Pope on social and economic organization is not likely to appeal to those whose sole criterion is mechanical efficiency. The Pope is deeply disturbed by the increasing anonymity of social processes and what His Holiness calls "the technical concept of society" originating in the gigantic enterprises of modern industry. "... the present age may take legitimate pride in the stable way in which these enterprises are organized and in the often novel and characteristic beauty of their external set-up," the Pope says. "But what must be denied is that modern social life should be regulated by them or made to conform to them."

The modern tends to glorify the efficient. For the Pope, "efficiency" is nothing, if its end result is a faceless complex of industrial organizations and correspondingly large and impersonal labor organizations, in both of which the human personality tends to be smothered. Instead, the Pope reminds us that social and economic organizations should be evaluated in terms of their service to the individual person and to such basic institutions as the family, and that social forms which work against the wel-

fare of these are efficient only on the surface. Thus the task of the Christian in the modern world must necessarily include searching for new social and economic forms which can harness the tremendous productive powers inherent in modern industrialism, without at the same time doing violence to the human spirit.

THE GATHINGS AFFAIR

THE controversial Gathings Committee has now run its course and its progress was both fascinating and educational. On the one hand it provided the spectacle of earnest legislators, worried over the national morals, who were outraged equally by "girlie" magazines and by novels of James T. Farrell and John Steinbeck. On the other hand it offered lessons in literary criticism and intellectual freedom which the accused publishers, in defense of their activities, read to the congressmen.

In the Committee's final report, what the publishers most feared—a move toward the imposition of some federal censorship of communications—was avoided, but attention was focused on the lurid level of some publishers' advertising.

This could be a most hopeful thing. From the beginning there was the issue of objectionable publishing practices (especially in cover designs), and this issue was real. Then there was a danger that the Committee would seek to impose a federal censorship—and this danger was real too. If now, as a result of the investigation, the legislators have learned something new about literary criticism and the heinousness of arbitrary censorship, something of great value will have been accomplished. And if the publishers of the offending books and magazines have come away from the hearings with a sense of sin and a purpose of amendment, then something of tremendous worth will have been accomplished too. We will then have moved toward a more civilized America.

But it may be rash to hope for so much so quickly. We might be less surely disappointed if we limit our hopes to those for the publishers, and this for two reasons. Being, on the whole, men of some education and taste, the publishers should realize that it is at least partially their own conduct which has forced the uncomfortable situation in which they now find themselves; and, being men with hard-headed business sense, they must know that unless they take the initiative in remedying the situation the initiative may soon be taken from them. The result might then be that censorship which they rightfully fear as catastrophic for the cause of freedom in America.

Anti-Semitism on the Left

WHAT DO THE PRAGUE TRIALS FORESHADOW? AN
ANALYSIS AND SOME PROPOSALS FOR THE WEST.

WILL HERBERG

COMMUNIST purges are nothing new. Since the large-scale "liquidations" of the late 1930's, the world has become accustomed—perhaps too accustomed—to periodical bloodlettings in the Soviet Union, performed against the nightmare background of state-managed "trials" and "confessions." Nor is there anything particularly novel about the removal and elimination of high-placed leaders in the satellite countries. In the few brief years of Soviet domination, every satellite country of Eastern Europe has undergone a purge, some indeed two or three in succession. Such things are more or less taken for granted as part of the mechanics of Communist rule.

And yet the recent trials in Czechoslovakia, in which Rudolf Slansky and thirteen co-defendants, most of them veteran Communists of high rank, confessed to the most atrocious crimes and were sentenced to death or long terms of imprisonment, did send a spasm of horror through the Western world. For these trials were not just routine purge trials. A new element seemed to be present not hitherto associated with Communist purges. Eleven of the fourteen persons accused were Jews and the indictments as well as the whole course of proceedings emphasized that fact. Nor was their Jewishness merely an irrelevant detail. They were accused of being the agents and accomplices of a vast Jewish conspiracy to promote "American imperialism" and to undermine the Soviet Union, the Czechoslovak "People's Republic," and the "people's democracies" of the other satellite states. The world Zionist movement, anchored in the State of Israel, was presented as the instrument of this conspiracy, and John Foster Dulles, Henry Morgenthau, and David Ben Gurion—along with Konni Zilliacus, the British leftist!—were denounced as among the foreign ring-leaders. Two Israeli citizens in Czechoslovakia, one of them a prominent member of the pro-Soviet Mapam, were charged with, and of course confessed, active participation in the conspiracy, while the Israeli envoy in Prague was accused of espionage and his recall demanded. The "confessions" of Slansky and the other

defendants were lurid with details of this vast and worldwide Jewish-Zionist plot; the whole thing, in fact, took on the appearance of a horribly real stage production of the half-forgotten Protocols of the Elders of Zion, translated into the vocabulary of present-day Soviet Communism.

What can this new Soviet anti-semitism mean? What are its roots and sources? How indeed is a Communist anti-semitism possible; is not anti-semitism something that only the "extreme right" goes in for? And what do the Prague trials foreshadow as to the fate of the Jews behind the Iron Curtain and as to the course of Soviet policy in the coming period? These questions go right to the heart of an understanding of contemporary Communism.

IT is important to realize that despite first appearances, there is nothing essentially new about the Prague trials except the crassness of the anti-semitism. Anti-semitism in more or less explicit form has for decades been an instrument of Communist strategy, and since the middle 1930's at least, increasingly part of the Soviet way of life. Peter Viereck has shown, in a valuable appendix to his *Conservatism Revisited*, how anti-semitism was used by Stalin as a political weapon as far back as 1907. He and others have also laid bare the Communists' frequent resort to anti-semitism in the course of the political struggles and inner-party conflicts of the late 1920's and 1930's, in Russia, in Germany, in France, even in America. In September 1929, for example, during some bloody conflicts in Palestine in which the Communists took the anti-Jewish side, the Yiddish-language organ of the Communist Party in this country, *Freiheit*, published a series of cartoons full of fat, hooknosed, gross-looking Jews, with dollar-signs all over their moneybags and bellies, shooting innocent Arabs or else brandishing the whip over poor undernourished working girls. The cartoons could easily have appeared, later on, in Streicher's anti-semitic gutter press.

But until the middle 1930's, this kind of thing was largely a matter of the unscrupulous utilization of an

Mr. Herberg writes frequently for *Commentary* and other magazines. He is the author of "Judaism and Modern Man."

effective political weapon, although even then an undercurrent of authentic anti-semitic sentiment could be detected. But around 1936 or 1937, most students of Russian history would now agree, something new appeared that was to have fateful consequences: a vociferous Great Russian chauvinism emerged as part of the Communist party "line" and increasingly of official Soviet life and culture. Russification of the Ukraine, White Russia, and other non-Great Russian lands in the Soviet empire was carried through at great cost. Western orientation and Western connections came to be regarded with rabid suspicion and finally fell under official ban.

The Nazi-Soviet pact naturally intensified the anti-Western orientation; and even the war years, in which Russia was at least formally associated with the Western powers, did not seriously affect the basic attitudes. Great Russian chauvinism was maintained at a fever pitch during the war, and after the war, particularly with the onset of the "cold war," all stops were removed. Any "Westerners" who remained in Soviet public affairs were wiped out, and a Russian "nativism" of a most extravagant sort became the official ideology of Soviet life, tirelessly inculcated through every device of modern education and propaganda. Soviet writers and historians who so much as hinted that non-Great Russian traditions or achievements might have certain value were ruthlessly purged, while every Great Russian figure, no matter how vile or atrocious, was exalted if only he could be shown to have contributed something to the glory of the Russian nation. We find the Soviet penchant for claiming every discovery and invention made on the face of the earth rather ludicrous, but we may be assured that the mood out of which such absurdities grow is anything but funny: it is something deeply sinister and laden with the most serious significance for the world.

In this upsurge of chauvinism, the Jew was inevitably the first and chosen victim. All signs of independent Jewish life in the Soviet Union were wiped out—press, literature, schools, the remnants of Jewish social and cultural institutions. Even Communist party papers published in Yiddish or intended for Jewish readers were eliminated. And the Jews themselves became the object of a savage state-organized campaign of hatred and suspicion. The public services, especially the military and the foreign branches, were purged of Jews. Jewish writers and minor officials, most of whom had almost succeeded in forgetting that they were Jews, were suddenly dragged out and pilloried as "homeless cosmopolitans" and "passportless intellectuals," and Jew-baiting became a recognized Soviet activity. Soviet anti-semitism has since passed through several phases, reflecting domestic and foreign developments, but no one can doubt that it is today an integral part of Soviet life and culture.

THE Prague trials may therefore be properly considered as an extension of Soviet anti-semitism to the satellite countries of the Soviet orbit. For that very reason, a closer examination of the factors involved may prove instructive.

The common explanation in the West is that the Jews were again being cast in their immemorial role of "scapegoats." There is considerable truth in this view as far as it goes. When Ludwik Frejka, the author of the Czech Two and Five Year Plans, was made to confess, "I sabotaged in such a way that there is still rationing of electricity and food," or when others solemnly swore that they had diverted shipments intended for domestic use or the Soviet Union to the State of Israel, the point is pretty obvious. Scapegoats to take up popular resentment and to be saddled with the blame for destructive economic policies were clearly needed; but why the Jews, of whom there are only thirty-five thousand in all Czechoslovakia, and why the fantastic machinery of a vast "Zionist conspiracy"?

The fact of the matter seems to be that there exists a certain fear of Zionism among the Communist masters of Eastern Europe. To the beaten, crushed, and miserably oppressed Jewish masses of Romania, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Russia, Zionism comes as a revivifying gospel of hope and the State of Israel beckons with the promise of refuge.

In Russia, Zionism was outlawed in the first years of the new regime; in the satellite countries, its status was increasingly precarious, until there too it was outlawed. But the growing appeal of Zionism among the Jewish masses could not be held in check. The Soviet masters had a startling demonstration of this fact when in 1949 Golda Myerson came as first Israeli ambassador to Moscow; the Jews of Moscow, braving the police, gave her an overwhelming spontaneous and unmistakably pro-Zionist ovation. There can be no doubt about it: this kind of primitive and unideological Zionism has become a real force among the Jews under the Soviet yoke and therefore an intolerable challenge to Communist totalitarianism. That is at least part of the reason for the fantastic structure of a worldwide "Zionist conspiracy" on which the Prague trials were erected.

By the same token, the Prague trials were unquestionably intended to play a part in the current Soviet intrigues in the Near and Middle East. For a brief period, Moscow supported the State of Israel, but informed observers pointed out at the time how shortlived this "pro-Zionist" orientation was bound to be. As far back as the spring of 1949, American Communists were denouncing the government of Israel as a "tool of American imperialism," and of course they were merely echoing Moscow's instructions.

Today the Soviet line is definitely anti-Israel; it is directed at stirring up large-scale violence on all fronts

and at establishing "connections" with the leading forces in the Arab world. Obviously, the Prague trials can be turned to good use for these purposes. It is significant that the anti-semitic theme of these trials was highlighted most openly and crudely in the propaganda directed to the Arab lands. Reports from these areas indicate that these efforts have not been entirely without success.

THE current Soviet strategy in the Near and Middle East is linked with something considerably more far-reaching in its implications, and that is the new over-all Soviet line as it has emerged in recent months. There seems to be every indication that alongside of a renewed Popular Front appeal where that can bring results, Soviet strategists are beginning to develop another kind of front, a front designed to embrace ultra-nationalist forces as well as politically active elements of pro-fascist background and orientation. The demonstrative Communist support given not only to Peron's rabid anti-Americanism but also to his economic program is an aspect of this policy, and so also is the systematic playing up to barely disguised Nazi hopes and ambitions in Eastern Germany. Moscow seems to be promoting a new kind of "national Communism" with a special appeal to reactionary, extreme nationalist elements, whose resentments make them anti-American and therefore fit partners for the Kremlin.

In this sinister game, anti-semitism can be a powerful weapon, and it is one that Stalin knows well how to use. It should not be forgotten that over large parts of Europe the anti-semitism which the Nazis fomented and exploited is very far indeed from being dead; it is this smoldering Jew-hatred that the masters of Soviet strategy are counting on arousing and utilizing for their own purposes.



But, as I have already suggested, it would be wrong and misleading to attempt to reduce the matter simply to deliberate and calculated strategy. Anti-semitism has become part of the Soviet Communist *ethos*, both in the "motherland" and in the satellite states. The elimination of every "alien infection" is, of course, a corollary of the chauvinism that dominates official Soviet life and that serves also as ideological preparation for a war with the West. "One by one, every group [in the satellite states] with any kind of tie beyond the Iron Curtain has been eliminated," James Reston reports in the *New York Times* for November 27, 1952. "First, it was the politicians who had ties with the West; then the intellectuals with their 'dangerous' no-

tions of free inquiry; then the Roman Catholics with their ties to the Vatican; and now it is the Jews. . . ." Whenever any society falls to deifying itself—and that is surely what totalitarianism, Soviet or Nazi, does to a consummate degree—the Jew stands out as a challenge and reproach. The Jew bears this witness quite apart from any views or desires of his own; he may be eager to surrender everything and make his peace with the regime on any terms—but he will not be permitted. Merely by being a Jew, merely by existing, he is an affront to self-idolizing totalitarianism. "Inevitably," Roger Shinn notes in a perceptive study of religion and history, "Hitler found in the Jews (*by their very existence*) and in faithful Christians (*by their religious protests*) a reminder of the universalisms . . . he could not tolerate"* [emphasis mine.—W.H.]—and what Shinn says about Hitler is becoming increasingly true about Stalin.

To the Communist hierarchy intent upon "coordinating" the bodies, minds, and spirits of the masses in the Soviet Union and the satellite states of the Soviet empire, the Jew is indeed an indigestible element: do what he may, he cannot quite conform and lose himself in the idolatrous self-enclosed culture of the totalitarian state. Somehow he is *in*, but never entirely *of*, the world in which he finds himself; somehow, for all he may say or do, he cannot quite throw off the shadow of the supra-national "ghost-people" to which he belongs. He is an anomaly, an insufferable anomaly. Hitler felt this with all the insane passion of his hatred, and Stalin has begun to feel it too. Hitler could not understand it, nor does Stalin; nor for that matter do we, fully: it is part of the "mystery of Israel." But it is a fact, a hard and gritty fact, an intolerable fact for the totalitarian; and it is this fact that in the last analysis provides the clue to the weird phantasmagoria of the Prague trials.

WHAT do the Prague trials portend for the Jews behind the Iron Curtain? There are, according to our best reckoning, some two and one half million of them—two million in the Soviet Union, two hundred fifty thousand in Romania, one hundred thousand in Hungary, eighty thousand in Poland, and thirty five thousand in Czechoslovakia. It seems only too likely that these are destined for a fate very like that which the Jews of Europe a decade ago met at the hands of Hitler. The tempo will be slower; above all, the way will be more devious; but except for those who can be rescued and the few able to lose themselves and some-

* "Religious Faith and the Task of the Historian," *Liberal Learning and Religion*, ed. Amos N. Wilder (New York, 1951), p. 70.—"The Jew," says H. Sacher, "is always in a minority. He can hardly avoid putting a note of interrogation after every dogma or convention" ("Revenge on the Prophets: A Psychoanalysis of Antisemitism," *Menorah Journal*, Fall 1940).

how erase their Jewish identity, the end will be extinction. This is beginning to be sensed by the Jews behind the Iron Curtain; the wave of suicides reported among Jews in Czechoslovakia and Romania, and to some degree also in Hungary and Poland, painfully recalls memories of what happened in Germany when the true meaning of Nazi anti-semitism first began to dawn on the still incredulous Jews.

Czechoslovakia is first among the satellite states; why, it is hard to tell—perhaps the anti-semitic drive fell in with the desperately savage clique struggle among the top Communist leadership. But after Czechoslovakia will come the others. Ana Pauker, a bitterly self-hating Jew from an Orthodox Jewish family, is waiting her turn in Romania, and in Poland the Israeli minister has, like his colleague in Prague, been charged with espionage and expelled. The Budapest Communist press is repeating with monotonous ferocity, “Hungary too is plagued with Zionism,” and incredibly enough similar officially-inspired outbursts are to be heard in East Germany, which one would think to be singularly free of the Jewish “taint.” The demon of anti-semitism has been let loose once more; who can foretell the havoc it will work before it can be curbed again?

What can we of the outside world do? Frustratingly little, but that little is important. We must in the first place rouse ourselves out of the moral insensibility into which an endless succession of horrors has beaten us. For our own spiritual health if for no better reason, we ought to speak up and give expression to what remains of what was once known as the “conscience of mankind.” This applies to all of us—to the government, to the churches, the schools and colleges, the professions, the labor movement, the civic organizations. There ought to be no group or institution in this country that does not make its voice heard.

If we are really aroused to the horror of the situation, we will be ready to give of our aid and resources to rescue whom we can from the slaughterhouse behind the Iron Curtain. This is a task of simple humanity: every Jew rescued is a human life saved.

Finally, the Prague trials and the whole situation which they reflect ought to teach us something about the enemy we face. The so-called “East-West” conflict is not simply an economic, political, military, or even ideological conflict, although it is all of these. It is above all a religious struggle, a struggle of vast spiritual forces, a conflict of ultimate loyalties. As we confront Communism, we are wrestling not merely with “flesh and blood,” but also and above all with “principalities and powers,” with the “world rulers of this darkness,” with the “spiritual hosts of evil in the high places,” to employ St. Paul’s stirring terminology. And for this struggle it is just possible that we need other weapons and another spirit than those we have so far been able to muster.

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The Docks: Cops and Robbery

DURING the big seamen’s strike of 1936-37 the Catholic Worker ran a soup kitchen for the strikers on 10th Avenue, a block off the New York waterfront.

Fifty yards down the street stood the Church of the Guardian Angels, “the seamen’s church;” and around the corner was the apartment house where lived Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen’s Association, AFL. At the time Ryan was doing his best to help the shipowners break the strike.

I remember seeing Joe kneeling at Midnight Mass on Christmas day, right up in the front pew. And standing in the back was that other Joe, Joe Curran, leader of the striking seamen. Curran never pretended to be a frequent churchgoer, but Ryan was known as a pillar of the parish and could frequently be seen on the sidewalk after Mass talking earnestly with the pastor.

I often wonder what that pastor, who placed so much faith in Joe, is now thinking as he reads about the \$1,500 a year that Ryan took from Daniels & Kennedy, just one of the firms that employ members of Joe’s union. The sum of \$1,500 a year in checks made out to fictitious names, but somehow transferable into non-fictitious cash. The sum of \$1,500 a year, always given to Joe by the president of the company—alone in Joe’s office—for which Joe did “nothing,” in the president’s words. Nothing, that is, but prostitute his position as president of the union and sell out the interests of the men who paid his salary.

It isn’t hard to understand why Joe Ryan was so anxious to break that seamen’s strike back in 1936. Nor is it hard to understand why he has labored so diligently to break so many strikes since then; strikes of seamen and strikes of longshoremen, his own members, rebelling against his corrupt and tyrannical rule.

We have reason to thank God for the work of the New York State Crime Commission which, at last, has officially removed the lid from the cesspool that is the New York waterfront. Already the thieves and murderers on the docks and in the offices of the ILA are going to jail. Justice and her uneven scales, justice, which has rarely waited so long for the punishment of such crimes, is now at last beginning to see the day of settlement.

The hearings are continuing and Ryan hasn’t even been put on the stand yet, but the Crime Commission

has already produced evidence to show that over the years 1947 to 1951 alone Ryan took \$9,850 in pay-offs from various steamship, stevedoring and dock companies. Over the same period these companies paid out \$182,214, at least, to ninety-nine officials of the ILA, Ryan's union, in the port of New York.

The discouraging part of this is that corruption has poisoned Ryan and anti-Ryan elements alike. Gene Sampson, business agent of Local 791, and perennial leader of anti-Ryan strikes, received \$3,350. Frank Nawrocki, a standout anti-Ryan business agent in Brooklyn, took \$2,270 in tainted dough.

THE cancer is so extensive that it is a question whether the AFL does not have an obligation to lift the ILA charter and start all over again with a new union. One of the first requirements of such a union would have to be that no ex-convict could hold office. In my mind, it is a question whether any ex-convict should be allowed to work on the docks, particularly one who has been convicted of a major crime. I know there are honest men who plead for a chance for the poor fellows who may have planted a few wild oats in their youth and reaped a short stretch up the river. But putting an ex-convict on the docks right now is like putting a child before candy and expecting him not to grab. It is the better part of mercy not to subject the man to such a situation. When we get this thing straightened out, there may be room for leniency.

The shape-up too must go. That cannot be said, cannot be insisted on, too often. The shape-up is an invitation to corruption because it puts so much power in the hands of one man—the hiring boss; power which is too easy for the mobs to seize. It is an invitation to a cruel, unequal waste of manpower which enables a few lucky ones to make a killing and forces the vast majority of longshoremen to struggle along on the crumbs. The shipowners favor the shape-up, of course, because it gives them a big pool of workers, all competing for the available jobs.



There are many solutions, most of them good and necessary, as those who will read the literature on the subject can discover. But what is needed first is simply a great determination on the part of the public that this filth, this outrage, this violation of everything human and decent, be cleaned up. What we need right now is a few honest cops. And in Judge Proskauer and his New York State Crime Commission we seem to have found them.

RETREATS FOR WORKINGMEN

IT is more pleasant and appropriate right now to talk about the work that a group of Jesuits in Boston are doing.

In 1948 Father Edward Murphy, S. J., had a new idea. He realized that the usual week-end retreat does not reach the ordinary working man. The working man doesn't have the money or the time to spend on such things. Even though retreat houses don't usually insist on any fixed sum, a guy figures he should leave at least ten dollars or he is not pulling his weight. This he hasn't got. And anyway his wife would never let him run off like that and leave her to wrestle with the kids for a whole week-end.

So Father Murphy conceived the idea of a retreat movement that would catch the men for a few hours after work, in a spot near their work, and then try to get them to come back once a month for nine months a year. A man would have the choice of coming any week-day night for four weeks. On any one of the twenty nights the retreat would be the same. Then it would change for another four weeks. And so on for nine months. Father Murphy figured that if a man came every month for nine months the odds were that he would probably get as much or more out of it than one week-end of immersion in concentrated spirituality.

It would seem that he was right. But the start was slow and difficult. Father Murphy, his brother Paul, and several other Jesuits were assigned to the work, and with their own hands cleaned, painted and remodeled some unused classrooms in a parochial school. The only funds available were those which the priests themselves were allowed to earn and retain for that purpose. They called their organization Saint Joseph's Retreat League for Workingmen.

The first month only forty-eight men showed up in all, an average of less than three a night. Sometimes the Jesuits waited around for an hour and when nobody showed up, closed the place for the night. But even when the priests outnumbered the audience, they gave them the full treatment: rosary, the three spiritual talks in the chapel, the two blackboard talks and discussion in the smoking lounge, one of which was always on some aspect of Catholic social doctrine. Then there was personal contact, the private conferences with individual retreatants.

Month by month, slowly, the number grew. By May, 1948, there were two hundred eighty-two men. By the end of the second year five hundred forty-one men a month, most of them union members. By the end of the third year there were six hundred ninety-six men and the Fathers Murphy, who didn't like to work with more than forty a night, decided that their converted schoolrooms at Saint Mary's in the North End were too small.

In 1951 a new center was set up in the South End under Father Paul Murphy. This time the men chipped in and gave their own time to scrape and paint a suitable place. By the end of that year there were over two thousand men coming every month to the two centers. Saint Joseph's Retreat League for Workingmen was no longer an interesting experiment, but a proved and stirring success.

THEY say Father Ed is very eloquent, but I didn't get a chance to hear him. The night I was there he was away. We started in the South End and Father Paul, who had to double up and give a talk in the North End, drove me up there, talking about the movement and the effect it had had on the men: the alcoholics and ex-alcoholics, the nervous types, the man who wrote that the retreats had "changed the temper of his whole home, his relations with his wife, his children and even his mother-in-law."

Father Paul spoke that night on "The Christian Concept of Business." The springboard was a recent address that Pius XII had given to the Italian Catholic Association of Employers. From there he went into an excellent little profile of Léon Harmel, the French textile manufacturer (1829-1915). He told how Harmel had pioneered in the development of real honest-to-God trade unions, in the field of the living wage, workers' housing, health and welfare funds, etc.

He had some good quotations from Harmel: "The great work of our times is the salvation of our brethren the workmen . . . workmen feel the need of association: this need is rooted in human nature . . . these associations will be worthy of the name only if they are self-governed through the workers' committee . . . the best members [of this committee] will be found to be workmen who have suffered . . . those who have been purified through sufferings are the best in organizations."

Father Paul concluded: "Here was a Christian businessman, an apostle of striking insight into the social order, a man who loved God and his fellowmen, a man whose ideas were discarded by the men of his time, but which with every passing year meet stronger support in the concrete pressure of sound economics and the deeper need of Christian men and women who are one in creation, one in elevation by Christ, one in the dignity, love and peace of a truly human society."

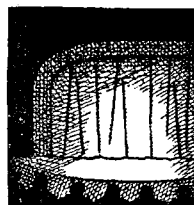
Those interested in more detail about the Boston retreats should see *America* for July 19, 1952, "Bringing Retreats to the Workers," or write to Rev. Edward Murphy, S. J.; Saint Joseph's Retreat League; 33 Stillman St., Boston. Such a movement as this is worth interest, for here indeed lies the long-range cure for crime on the waterfront.

JOHN C. CORT.

THE STAGE

TWO'S COMPANY

TWO may be company, but three is rather a crowd in the musical revue *Miss Bette Davis* recently exposed at the Alvin. It is the audience which constitutes the superfluous third at "Two's Company"—silent witness to the evening's persistent and witless inadequacies. I shall assume that Messrs. James Russo and Michael Ellis—two Sven-galis who charmed Hollywood's Trilby into a local appearance—had the paying public in mind when they brought off their novel stroke, but what, I wonder, can some odd months have done to their native hue of resolution?



At outrageous prices, they are offering here a random cabaret entertainment, spiced with the succulent presence of Miss Davis. One tends, in point of fact, to describe "Two's Company" in culinary terms: it has been artfully garnished by Miles White and opulently served by John Murray Anderson; most of the guests are out of the top drawer, and the silver and the best linen lie in readiness. But where's the bloody food?

To be sure, there are morsels: one thinks of Nora Kaye, moving with classic purity in the debris; of the inexplicable humor dropping through the vulgar net of Oliver Wakefield's garrulous British monologue; of dancing Bill Callahan's exhilarating precision, Hiram Sherman's pointed humor, or any number of other separate and individual excellences. But the driving wit, the central comic vein, is nowhere in evidence. A really impressive revue must establish its own authority—the authority of original perception and a satiric feeling for the texture of contemporary pretense and pomposity. But "Two's Company" is as dispiriting, featurelessness and utilitarian as a plastic dish. The majority of its sketches, assembled by a barrage of desperate gagmen, range from the *deja vu* to the *deja phew*. And the songs (Vernon Duke, Ogden Nash) exhibit that dreary competence which recalls most forcefully the atmosphere of West 44th Street: a piano littered with overflowing ash trays and a copy of Roget's *Thesaurus*.

Even Jerome Robbins, I regret to say, has rather let us down. He is slight but charming in his first number, impossibly vulgar in a Mexican item called "Esther," and sentimentally effective but oddly cloying in "Roundabout." Much credit has gone to "Haunted Hot Spot," a specimen of erotic *kitsch* heavily scored, in the modern manner, for brass and percussion, and displaying the Broadway imagination at its least at-

tractive. I confess to having found the work nothing but a prolonged aural and sensual exacerbation.

One comes, at last, to Miss Davis herself. She is, I should suppose, the only actress who could have given these proceedings something of a classic grace and polish, and to her most trivial gestures she brings an inexpressible distinction—the accumulated force of her personal beauty, her intelligent wit and a certain vibrant tension—which is irresistible. Yet one must concur in the majority opinion: that the musical revue is a field which does not well reward her attention.

It is a melancholy fact that so many of our major actresses have shown, in the maturity of their careers, this distressing confusion as to the nature of their talents. Miss Davis has been clever enough to choose a stage vehicle which, even if it did not succeed, would leave her dramatic status unimpaired. Yet one grows increasingly restive at the commonplace use she has made of her unique gifts; surely one of the great classic roles, or even another of her distinguished portraits of romantic sensibility, would provide quite as much a “change of pace” as the current aberration at the Alvin, or the domestically platitudinous films which have marked the most recent stages of her career. It would be a major catastrophe if we were to lose an actress of Miss Davis’ stature and achievement to the frivolities of both the East and West coasts. (*At the Alvin.*)

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

KERMIT Bloomgarden’s striking revival of Miss Lillian Hellman’s early success affords a fresh perspective from which to view the merits and limitations of this significant American talent. It is a commonplace that “The Children’s Hour” was only incidentally a play about two young women accused of an unnatural relationship. For what Miss Hellman was emphasizing in 1934, and now again, is the terrible power of a lie to devastate life, and the tragic insufficiency of self-righteousness in a complex world. Time has given her perceptions a dreadful authority, yet it is not as a political or moral document that I should like to discuss “The Children’s Hour”; it is not, after all, *enough* for a play to reject McCarthyism.

What I should like to underline, rather, is the immense *theatricality* of the work—the sheer, exhilarating sense it conveys of a positive dramatic talent, of a playwright who is not afraid to calculate her exits and entrances, to drop her curtains at a provocative moment, or to expose her characters to passion and violence. It is this imaginative boldness which has carried Miss Hellman past the failures of realism to a secure and irreproachable ground. Irreproachable? No, perhaps not: in our sober moments, we realize that “The Children’s Hour” is a very good play, not a mem-

orable one; that its theme is blurred by the last psychological turns of the screw; that it is marked by an irritating note of social stridency; that Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch’s original criticism of it as a gratuitous contemplation of evil is still valid. But much of this we are willing to forgive—or rather accept—for the privilege of again watching so gifted a dramatist at work.

Miss Hellman has directed the present production with skill and affection but not, I fear, a final authority. The first two acts move with virtuoso speed and brilliance, but the last—in which the author makes some of her most stringent demands—is vitiated by a curiously remote and static approach. The movement here is all interior, and I cannot but feel that Miss Hellman, who at her best is a moral melodramatist, has failed to find an objective equivalent for the tensions implicit in her situation. As a result, and most unfortunately, some of the stultifying boredom of the doomed young women communicates itself to the audience.

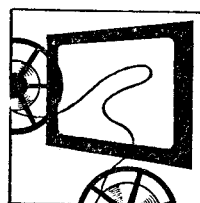
Even Kim Hunter, an actress of impeccable distinction, does not catch here the tragic fire. Patricia Neal, on whom a formidable dramatic burden falls, conveys a splendid neurotic intensity, but somehow seems oddly out of focus. Iris Mann is malevolently guileful as the pathologic child, and there are sharp portraits from life by Katherine Emmet, Mary Finney and Janet Parker. But it is really Miss Hellman’s evening all the way, and it is a pleasure to note that time has not diminished the virtues of a most considerable American drama. (*At the Coronet.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

TIME FOR LAUGHTER

THE Australian import “Wherever She Goes” is noteworthy for its naive charm in depicting the childhood struggle of Eileen Joyce, the famous pianist. The film starts and ends with Miss Joyce her-



self at the piano playing with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in England, and most of it is a flashback to incidents in her childhood in the bushland of Tasmania, where she fell in love with music, and in the mining district of Kalgoorlie, an unlikely locale, where she followed her heart’s desire.

With unaffected simplicity, a blond youngster by the name of Suzanne Parrett plays this girl who was attracted to music and who was determined to be a pianist. Although some of the acting is almost amateur and the plot is an old-fashioned success story, this pic-

ture's Australian scenes and Michael S. Gordon's sincere direction make it a refreshing experience.

WHILE "Curtain Up," an import from England, is no great shakes, its two leading players are so wonderfully funny that the whole thing has a pleasant glow even in the scenes in which they do not appear. The story concerns a repertory company in a small English city and their travail in putting on next week's show. Its subplots about the problems and conflicts of the various members of the company are not very interesting but things brighten whenever the company's temperamental director and the play's dogmatic author get into the act.

As played by Margaret Rutherford, whose solid build and jutting jaw are more solid and jutting than ever, this playwright is the very personification of aggressive determination. With preconceived ideas as to how her brain-child should be acted, costumed and set, she drives the director batty. The director (Robert Morley), who has a pretty low opinion of the play and its author, is a weird combination of offended sensitivity and wise practicality. Director Ralph Smart cleverly lets Rutherford and Morley battle and they make the most of the opportunity. The result is hilarious.

THERE are some very amusing scenes in "The Little World of Don Camillo," too—as when Don Camillo disturbs the Communist rally by ringing his church bells, or when the priest and his opponent, the Communist mayor, each give their pep talks to their teams before the soccer game, or at any time during the film when that magnificent French actor Fernandel, playing Don Camillo, registers on his homely but expressive face the conflict between his duty toward a fellow man and his desire to get even with the mayor.

"Don Camillo" is really an Italo-French picture. Handsomely produced in Italy by Rizzoli Amato with a French and Italian cast and directed by French Julien Duvivier, the movie stems from the tales by Italian writer Giovanni Guareschi. (The print I saw had a French sound track and English sub-titles.) I'd be curious to know what anti-Communist Guareschi thought of the finished film. Fernandel is winning as the pugnacious priest; so is the Communist mayor (well played by Gino Cervi). In fact, the script goes so far as to say that both men have the same goals—something which I doubt, and which I believe Don Camillo himself would deny vehemently. At the film's end (in a scene that is surprisingly sticky for Director Duvivier) the priest says to the Communist mayor that it would take a miracle to make me one of you.

But in spite of the film's playful attitude toward Communism, "The Little World of Don Camillo" is

entertaining and pleasant fare for those who like their sentiment gushy and their characters jolly—at least on the surface.

ANOTHER movie that uses Communism as a springboard for comedy is "No Time for Flowers," an American production, filmed in occupied Austria. Although the screenplay by Laslo Vadnay and Hans Wilhelm has a somewhat confusing story (I was never sure who was spying on whom), its situations with spies spying on spies are very amusing. The locale is Prague, and no doubt to Czechoslovakians all this satire on Communist red tape and fear of truth isn't very funny. But perhaps it's good to kid the Communists once in a while. Director Don Siegel handles his cast, most of whom are Austrian, headed by Viveca Lindfors and Paul Christian, in a tongue-in-cheek manner. Some of the dialogue is thought-provoking as well as laugh-provoking. As Viveca's papa says after being confined in prison, "I never met nicer people: an archbishop, a scientist and a Nobel Prize winner."

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"CATHOLICS AND HOLLYWOOD"

Hollywood, California.

TO the Editors: This Catholic who does not like the pedestrian in art any more than Walter Kerr but has a keen realization of the fact that we live in an imperfect world, and are bound by what Dore Schary, in the same issue of *The Commonweal* (December 19), calls "the limited amount of superior talent," happens to have been on the spot the day the Christopher awards arrived for the writing of "Quo Vadis"

The recipients of the thousand dollar checks were proud and happy, not only because anybody can use a bonus, but because they were the envy of the other writers at the studio for having been singled out for distinguished honors. Is anyone under the illusion that this will not stimulate other creative people to look less fondly on the lurid and seamy in life, and begin to explore subject matter for good adult themes, such as, say, the operation of grace in the midst of sin?

If there is any doubt in the matter, it is only necessary to point to the heartening sequel which is taking place at the same studio, M.G.M., at this very moment. They have already purchased another Christopher prize-winning story, written by a Negro non-Catholic woman, and to be produced by a gentlemanly Jew named Sol Fielding, titled, "See How They Run."

And for the record, it is being adapted for the screen by a contributor to the same issue of *The Commonweal* as Walter Kerr, Emmet Lavery.

And now about the Production Code, with its "barbed wire barriers." The first question to be asked is how it suddenly happens that a man who is laying the whip to American Catholics for supporting the safe-but-banal, by some slick elision shuttles the blame over on the code? The code is not sponsored or financed by the Church. It is an instrumentality of the movie industry. . . .

But even granting the chain of rationalizations where-by Mr. Kerr fixes the code for some of the responsibility, it is not a closed story with his *ipse dixit*. As a critic, Walter Kerr may have a point in fussing with the "guardians" on the question of Maugham's "The Letter." I really do not know. . . . Clearly, however, when he launches into the general topic of crime-and-punishment under the code, he walks along the brink of arrogance.

He states: "In the case of the Production Code, the failure to balance prudence with knowledge would seem to have resulted in some curious philosophical constructions." The one word which saves this opinion from being overbearing is the word "seem." How does Kerr know how much "knowledge" is enjoyed by the administrators of the Production Code? Has he even so much as spoken to one of them? And if anyone says that the criticism is levelled against the code as an institution, and not against the personnel who are its "custodians," the answer is that this is a distinction without a difference.

The code in itself is the mere letter, written on a piece of paper. It is inseparable from its day-by-day interpretation; and as a living organism the law, and the administrators of the law, are part and parcel of one and the same thing.

It would have helped immeasurably had Walter Kerr had before him a copy of the original draft of the code when he wrote his otherwise stimulating ideas. In simple English it notes: "Crime and sin *need not* always be punished, so long as the audience is made to know that they are wrong." The spirit in which the code has always been administered has been in keeping with this clause. As an example, refer for instance to the Walter Wanger picture "Scarlet Street," in which the punishment for the murderer consisted in living with the pangs of his conscience. Would this satisfy "the critics"?

If not, what about the recent Academy award winner "African Queen," in which the punishment for the sin of fornication was only that Miss Hepburn and Mr. Bogart get each other in the end?

What was the punishment for the adulterer in "Madame Bovary"? The last seen of him, he was out on his estates shooting pheasants. And what of the two

adulterers in "September Affair"? Their punishment is simply that they are separated from each other, the man returning to seek the bosom of his family, the woman going her way in the hopes that she can pick up the shattered fragments of her concert career.

What of the adulterer in "Pitfall"? He is taken back, not with elation, certainly, but taken back by his wife.

And lastly, coming right down to the finish line, what about the resolution to the story of adultery that is still in circulation as a second-run, "Clash By Night"? In this picture Barbara Stanwyck returns to her husband, Paul Douglas. If it is not charity and common sense that motivate his generosity, what is it?

And then, there is "A Streetcar Named Desire." What has to be understood is that the production code administration did not invent the ending to this film. It only approved it. This does not mean it applauded it. It only approved it as next-best. The men on the production code try to be realists. Faced with the problem of taking some cognizance of the heinousness of Stanley's rape of his sister-in-law, while his wife was in the hospital delivering a child, the barbed-wire-stringers asked for some invention on the part of the studio. . . .

WALTER KERR states, clairvoyantly: "There are more subtle, and more terrifying, punishments than the Code quite envisions." Without asking again how anyone who has not made a picture can know what the Code envisions, it is possible to deduce that this is not a critic who is against the classic tradition of telling stories of sin-and-tragedy, like "Anna Karenina" and "Oedipus Rex." He is *for* punishment. He only wants it more subtle and more devious.

While the Code does not always insist on a storytelling pattern of sin-and-punishment, it must be admitted, of course, that this is the usual "formula." But it will be helpful to recall that, first of all, the great bulk of films do not lend themselves to levying a delicate tax on sin and crime; and secondly, that precise punishment for precise waywardness, generally speaking, *fits the needs* of producers in making pictures. Punishment is dramatic!

When a man is shot, or has handcuffs put on him, it is possible to put a camera on it and photograph it. It also brings an end to the story, which is the goal of most producers. So that the aims of the Code, to show that sin is sin by showing that it carries its own nemesis, and the purposes of the picture makers, are both served in one fell swoop. . . .

It is an arrangement of convenience to divide off the church members in this country into the "critics" and the "guardians"; those who are committed on the one side to prudence and "good," and those who are committed on the other side to art and the "adult."

Everyone knows that in reality there is no such sharp cleavage. But while those who are the guardians are ready to grant that the critics do not despise prudence, it is fondly to be hoped that those who love the adult would abandon the notion that the custodians have a fixation that amounts to rigor mortis on the "good," but do not love art as well.

JOHN A. VIZZARD.

*Assistant to Joseph I. Breen, Director,
Production Code Administration, Motion
Picture Association of America.*

Spokane, Wash.

TO the Editors: What distinguished the issue of December 19th was Mr. Walter Kerr's article titled, "Catholics and Hollywood." Here for once was a man of stature stating with embarrassing clarity something that has needed expression by one of his standing for some time.

. . . we are compelled to agree that his is an accurate evaluation, that his conclusions are pungently convincing. But Mr. Kerr's remarks go far deeper than the making of good movies, for this situation is but an external manifestation of a much more serious cleavage between a Christian philosophy of art and actual Catholic attitudes and practices towards the arts. Perhaps the situation might be laid bare by looking at the teaching of the arts on the university level, for here the clash between theory and practice is sharp and, it seems to me, vital.

Anyone who is familiar with present-day education knows that the school of arts has its back to the wall. Students want "practical" courses: "You can't fry Milton or boil Shakespeare, and, after all, you gotta eat!" They want courses with a future, a financial future. . . .

This situation is evident in most of higher education generally, both public and private, but in Catholic higher education a twist has been added, to justify this attitude towards the arts, which is lethal—the moral stigma. As one alert student put it, "I don't know how a Catholic school justifies your teaching of most English literature: Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton are anti-Catholic; Shakespeare, Jonson (most of Elizabethan drama), the Metaphysical and Romantic poets are lewd, ribald, and immoral. At least according to the Legion of Decency they are. You can't deny it!" In other words, the Legion of Decency would classify most of English literature in Class C—Condemned. And once more, he's right. The Catholic teacher in the arts field (especially the fine arts) discovers that he is teaching not only unpopular courses, but even "immoral" ones. And his only honest move is to question the values and standards being used in Catholic censorship, an action at which most of his colleagues

throw up their hands while making some axiomatic remark about being prudent.

To date, our actions mark us as cowards, for we have gone along with values that we know are philosophically unsound, esthetically lacking both in good taste and artistic quality. We haven't raised our voices in honest criticism and thus we find ourselves in these altogether absurd situations. Isn't it silly that a large majority of Catholics, including the clergy, find themselves condemning, implicitly or explicitly, the products of our leading Catholic novelists, men who are highly esteemed by the art world in general?

The whole tenor of Catholic censorship is negative. The values upon which it functions will eventually remove all worthwhile creative activity. If, for example, all art must be evaluated primarily by its moral effect on the individual experiencing it, if it must be judged on its propagandistic merit (a basic norm, by the way, in Marxist art criticism), quite obviously we are left with an imponderable. The quirks of individual concupiscence vary immeasurably, and so "prudent" norms are set up which will take this factor into account. Thus the lowest common denominator makes its calculation: we find ourselves being considered as having the moral fortitude of less than an adolescent. . . .

Still there must be norms, you say! Yes, there must be values, positive ones. . . . We must supplement a bad idea with a better one, a false principle with a true one, a vulgar esthetic value with one of good taste. The boycott will never make any art better, never create a Christian culture.

I think it is time we disassociate the words "Catholic" and "censorship," for we don't want nor do we need censors. We want more and better Christian critics and reviewers who have their good taste grounded solidly in a knowledge of the arts. Moral theology is not enough. Through intelligent esthetic evaluations, and only by this means, will the artistic level (as well as the moral) of the popular arts be elevated. The Catholic attitude towards the arts should be the evaluations of highly skilled and articulate Christian critics, not a classified list of censorship.

Moreover, our first line of endeavor must be the encouragement of creative activity. Such action can be accomplished most effectively in education where young people, prospective artists and public, are first introduced to the arts . . . they should perceive that Christianity isn't an acid on the arts, but a leaven, not a means, but a meaning. The vast majority, of course, will not be gifted with significant amounts of creative talent, but they will be equipped to experience intelligently and completely one of man's highest activities.

DAVID ANTHONY DOWNES.

*English Department,
Gonzaga University.*

The Poet from Galesburg

NICHOLAS JOOST

“THERE are humble lives that have their treasures,” Carl Sandburg writes on one of the concluding pages of his autobiography, *Always the Young Strangers* (Harcourt Brace, \$5.). All too often those treasures waste their sweetness on the desert air. Once in a generation, if the generation is lucky, a poet gathers up the riches of the poor, spreads them before us and dazzles our eyes to tears with a gentle splendor. For our generation Sandburg has performed this feat.

His parents, August and Clara Sandburg, were not poor, their son assures us, although the father earned, in the eighties and nineties of the last century, thirty-five dollars a month as a blacksmith in Galesburg, Illinois. Symbols of faith and self-respect, the family Bible and the family album on the parlor's center table reminded the Sandburgs—Carl was one of seven children—that “We’re not rich—but we’re not poor!” Both father and mother were frugal, abstemious Swedish immigrants doggedly making the best of things on the lower fringes of small-town middle-class life, a life that at least permitted them to eat white bread daily in contrast to their life in the *Hemlandet*.

Bone-tired from working ten hours a day six days a week without vacation, fearful about his heavy family responsibilities, August Sandburg (who spelled it *Sandberg*, by the way) appears as a stern and reserved father, a man who with the passing years became increasingly engrossed with getting and spending. “‘I tink dis iss a good piece uh proputtty,’ or ‘Dat proputtty iss a good speckuhlation—it will go up.’ The word ‘speculation’ came natural to him. He was a speculator, though never a gambler.”

In expected contrast the portrait of Clara Sandburg is warmer and more openly affectionate, though justice, charity, and filial piety equally influence the delineation in both cases. This admirable woman, daughter of a gooseherd, left that occupation in Sweden and emigrated in order to better herself; began life in America as a maid in a hotel in Bushnell, Illinois and met August Sandburg when he came to the hotel as one of a railroad construction gang.

They talked and he said that he wanted to marry her. “I saw it was my chance,” she told the children

twenty years later, “and soon went to Galesburg and the Reverend Lindahl married us and we started house-keeping.” But for her “chance” Clara might have ended like that other simple heart, Flaubert’s Norman peasant. Of his parents’ marriage, Carl Sandburg comments dryly that August “had picked the right woman—for him.”

The narrative is much more, however, than a uniquely realized picture of Swedish immigrant life in the Midwest of the eighties. Sandburg ranges through all the strata of Galesburg’s life, a life as varied in its own kind as that of any English town. He recaptures with a pure wonder and an utter absence of bias and condescension the life of the railroad workers, the Irish, and the émigrés from New England; his school days and his friends at the Seventh Ward School; and the amusements to be had in the Galesburg Auditorium when theatrical troupes came to town.

One of the more fascinating chapters is that devoted to “Cigarette Biographies”: these histories were packed in Duke’s Cigarettes, and “The more of Duke’s Cigarettes you bought the more histories you would have. If you bought enough packages and read all the histories, you would know a lot about the Civil War generals.”



a career and of a nation, or at least the center of a nation.

Sandburg proceeds from this account of his boyhood to the story of his adolescent wanderings, his multitude of odd jobs, and his service as an enlisted man in the Spanish-American War. The tale ends with his return to Galesburg and his decision to enroll in Lombard College there and to work his way to a degree. We have, in sum, a thickly detailed portrait of a life and of a time, the background of

APPARENTLY *Always the Young Strangers* is a first of several autobiographical volumes. With the Lincoln biography and the various collections of Lincolniana, which are authoritative, this is Carl Sandburg’s most distinguished work. His collection of popular and folk songs, *The American Songbag*, is negligible except as a popular anthology; his recorded interpretation of these songs similarly lacks authenticity and is remarkable chiefly because the singer is Sandburg. His novel *Remembrance Rock* and the war-time miscellany *Home Front Memo* are downright embarrassing; it is hard to see how the same writer who is guilty of “Many people glad, so glad, Mistah Hess

Mr. Joost, a member of the English faculty at Loyola University in Chicago, serves on the editorial staff of *Poetry* magazine.

done decide come away fum Mistah Hitlah," can write of his own father that "he was never haunted by the mean and low rivalries that run through so many chapters of politics and business."

Sandburg's poetry is a mixture. On the whole it has gone utterly out of fashion, probably never to return. Embalmed by the score in anthologies of American literature, recited at businessmen's luncheons and Women's Club teas, these poems have completely disappeared from the anthologies and the discussions of the New Critics. When Sandburg's *Collected Poems* appeared recently, it won the Pulitzer Prize and some praise from *Time* and the *Nation*—weeklies with axes of their own to grind, or, to use plainer language, forces in our journalism that seek to impose on the nation and on the world an America made over in their own meretricious images. The more representative reviews were either hostile or condescending.

THE difficulty with most of Sandburg's poetry is that it is, ideologically, proletarian and, technically, insipid. Most readers no longer want to read such lines as "I won't take my religion from any man who never works except with his mouth and never cherishes any memory except the face of the woman on the American silver dollar," or "I asked the Mayor of Gary about the 12-hour day and the 7-day week." Critics are unkind to such poetry; not only has Auden done the same sort of thing better, but proletarian art belongs to a bygone and now suspect era out of which a definite pattern has emerged.

A poem like "The Windy City" is to be read, if at all, as a period piece. Indeed such is the common misunderstanding of "Chicago," Sandburg's most popular poem, that it has become a favorite of the very exploiting class against whom the poet directed it as an expression of his fervent social realism. The city boosters have now claimed it for their own.

"Chicago" succeeds precisely because the fervor of its socialistic utopianism—one might with justice speak of Sandburg's messianism in this early lyric—expresses itself as an image. The idea—the indomitable will to accomplishment of the "people"—is the famous metaphor: the proletarian Titan, "Hog Butcher for the World/. . . Stormy, husky, brawling,/ City of the Big Shoulders." Only by an arbitrary effort of abstraction can we separate idea and metaphor.

An early poem such as "The Harbor" has strength because its theme of social protest is stated in the contrast between slum-dwellers and a "fluttering storm of gulls/. . . Veering and wheeling free in the open." Regardless of literary fashion, despite the turning away from sociology to religion and "myth," such poetry has validity, and it is too bad that our New Critics refuse to give it place. One hopes they will not succeed. The

trouble is that even in the early poems metaphors do not always fuse with ideas, a fault especially obvious in longer works; as a result, "Slabs of the Sunburnt West" is not so much a mosaic of small images carefully disposed to make a large image as it is a quarry of rock slabs that the artist has not finished with.

Increasingly Sandburg disregards the metaphor for direct statement. Now poetry of statement may be very great poetry, as Dryden and Pope have shown us, but it must by its nature be a poetry diamantine in its hardness and brilliance. Sandburg lacks any technique in this sense, and consequently his later ideological poetry fails. Two things happen: his tension lessens, his rebellion against established society fades; and at the same time, his poetry loses its metaphorical quality, its one outstanding virtue. Where "The Harbor" expresses an orthodox social realism, the late "Is There Any Easy Road to Freedom" expresses the muzzy and now unfashionable popular-front idealism in a strange jargon distinguished from prose chiefly by the fact that it is printed in what we conventionally accept as the poetic line.

Early or late, however, wherever the metaphor of itself exercises absolute control of the poem—as in "Chicago," "The Harbor," "Fog," "Cool Tombs," and "Grass"—Sandburg attains technical success. It is an extremely limited success as an imitator of Whitman and as one of the Imagists. Sandburg has tried to write like Whitman without understanding the philosophical necessity of Whitman's form; the result is "poetic" prose, most often, and seldom a prose poem. Like most of the group of writers who published in *Poetry* shortly after 1912, Sandburg is influenced by Imagism; he has written that "Poetry is the capture of a picture, a song, or a flair, in a deliberate prism of words." Unfortunately, he has not seen fit to abide by this wise dictum in his own work.

SANDBURG'S weaknesses may be fatal to the bulk of his poems, but these very weaknesses paradoxically lend strength to his autobiography. An autobiography does not depend for success on any subtler organization than that of chronology, and Sandburg has delved into the depths of his own past and the past of Galesburg and the nation to achieve triumphantly his vision. A medley of imaged evocation and deliberate statement makes the stuff of his narrative. Sandburg has eschewed social realism, the proletarian note; instead he has turned to a simpler realism behind which lurk no ulterior motives. The tone of the poet—and *Always the Young Strangers* is in many passages, in the larger sense, poetry of a high order—warm, affectionate, at times wistful, at times robust. Love fills and informs the book. It is an American document, to be compared with *Look Homeward, Angel*.

A Labor of Scholarship and Love

CHARLES DICKENS: HIS TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH. By Edgar Johnson. Simon and Schuster. 2 vols. \$10.

By VIVIAN MERCIER

ANY discussion of Dickens invites one to hyperbole, perhaps because hyperbole was his favorite rhetorical device. His critics always praise him extravagantly or blame him extravagantly. As a result, the reader will think me guilty of similar extravagance if I give Edgar Johnson's new biography of Dickens the kind of praise it deserves. Professor Johnson (of New York's City College) has produced a book such as very few writers besides Dickens have ever been capable of—one that will have equal appeal to the uncritical reader and to the discerning one.

Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph, as the Book-of-the-Month's Club's choice for January, is already assured of popular success; the majority of its readers will hardly know or care that its author has examined thousands of manuscripts, letters and documents and provided an entire scholarly apparatus—notes, bibliography and index—which by itself fills almost two hundred pages. The results of this careful scholarship enrich the book's texture enormously without clogging its onward sweep.

In setting before us the ever-broadening triumph of Dickens's public career and the constant nagging tragedy of his private life, Edgar Johnson never allows us to lose sight of Dickens's development as a literary artist. Of fifty-nine chapters in all, no fewer than eleven are devoted to literary criticism. Each of these contains close analysis of one or two of the novels and a careful assessment of the growing maturity shown in almost every book.

These chapters form an essential part of Professor Johnson's plan, providing the reader with welcome islands for retrospect and reflection within the boiling current of the life. Not that the novels are con-

sidered in complete detachment from the life that nourished them. How could they be, when Dickens put so much of himself into them—his experiences, his beliefs, his unfulfilled desires?

Himself a liberal, Edgar Johnson does full justice to Dickens's liberalism—fuller justice than their limited knowledge permitted Shaw, Orwell, or even Edmund Wilson to dispense. For example, Dickens's previously unpublished letters to Miss Angela Burdett Coutts, of which Professor Johnson has just edited a selection under the title *The Heart of Charles Dickens*, give entirely new insights into the novelist's views on philanthropic, social and political subjects. Again, detailed study of Dickens's ceaseless activity as the editor and part-owner of two popular weekly magazines enables Johnson to show that Dickens inspired, and in part wrote, a great many articles promoting liberal views besides those reprinted as exclusively his.

Every reader will have his own favorite chapters in this biography. In some ways I like best those describing the first American visit. The epic quality that one finds in the book as a whole is nowhere more evident than here, as Dickens struggles against fantastic hostility and even more fantastic adulation, refusing to be intimidated by the one or made impossibly arrogant and conceited by the other. The young, untamed genius and the young, untamed nation, both still in their pioneering stages, were fit antagonists for each other.

Admittedly, no biographer could ask for a better subject than Dickens, with his vitality, his appetite for humor and pathos, in his life as in his books; it would be impossible to write an utterly dull study of Dickens. Had Edgar Johnson written merely a good book, he would hardly deserve the resounding praise which he received even before publication. The point is that not a single page among the more than eleven hundred of text is without its flash of excitement or of wisdom.

Two Collections of Lasting Interest

CATHOLIC DIGEST READER. Selected by the Editors. Doubleday. \$3.95.

THE *Catholic Digest*, that flourishing enterprise on the shores of Lake Superior, has gathered the gleanings of fifteen years of publication. Like most such collections, this one is a big (five hundred pages) package, with some stellar names on the wrapper: Francois Mauriac, Ronald Knox, Fulton Sheen, Walter Bedell Smith, Popes St. Leo I and Leo XIII, and, with modest anonymity, simply *Time*, to name a few.

The *Catholic Digest* editors have never pretended to reprint material from sources exclusively Catholic but have reaped from the secular field as well. This circumstance gives as much variety to the quality of *Digest* contents as to its subject matter. Some articles are "Catholic" by remote control only: Clare

Boothe Luce's story "The Al Smith Saga" looks like what it is, a piece written for the secular trade (*Vanity Fair*). "The Incarnation," by Pope St. Leo I, on the other hand, is a treatise which probably only Catholics are likely to be interested in.

The best writing in the Reader is culled from secular sources: Quentin Reynold's "Chaplain Courageous," from *Collier's*; Graham Greene's "The Assumption of Mary," from *Life*; Barbara Ward's "Rome, Ever Old and Ever New," from the *New York Times*, to name only a few. There are also impressive condensations from books: *The Diary of a Country Priest*, *The Song of Bernadette*, *Beyond East and West*.

But for strong supporters of the Catholic Press, there are also a few outstanding articles: Father James Reuter's "Nuns in Prison," from

Jesuit Missions; Father Gerald Fagan's "Where Workers Are Taught to Think," from the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*; Elizabeth Cobb's "A Feud With St. Joseph Cupertino" (source not given), are some of these.

The book includes eighteen sections and three main divisions: Religion at the Source, Religion at Work, and Religion in Persons. For readers who like their religious writing condensed (the *Digest's* current circulation, half a million or more, attests that many do), the *Catholic Digest Reader* looks like a good bet. J. H.

THE CATHOLIC MIND THROUGH FIFTY YEARS: 1903—1953. Edited by Benjamin L. Masse, S.J. America Press. \$5.

FIFTY years ago the Jesuit Fathers founded the *Catholic Mind*—before the days of the *Digest* magazines—to provide a more or less permanent record of papal encyclicals, pastoral letters, distinguished sermons, outstanding addresses, articles of permanent inter-

est, etc. The *Catholic Mind*—in *Digest* dress but still printing things *in toto*—survives today as a valuable monthly periodical whose editors are chosen from the regular staff of *America*, the Jesuit weekly. Father Benjamin Masse, who assembled this volume, has served as executive editor for the past ten years.

The *Catholic Mind*, by definition, is more of a scholarly than a journalistic undertaking. In its present state it fulfills a need not met by any other organ of the Catholic Press. The *Digest* magazines like to say they glean articles of permanent interest every month—but the *Catholic Mind*, if only because it deals so largely with matters of permanent interest, has a greater claim to this slogan.

Father Masse in undertaking this collection must have enjoyed an embarrassment of riches. His final choices—the *optima optimorum* found here—cover authoritatively a variety of matters by a variety of eminent ecclesiastical spokesmen. Among those present are a number

of distinguished members of the American hierarchy; outstanding politicians; leading Catholic writers like Belloc, Dawson, Father Martindale, Sister Madeleva; and journalists like Count Dalla Torre, Fathers Hartnett and Parsons and Donald MacDonald. Throughout the book are pertinent quotations from the writings of the recent Popes. *The Catholic Mind Through Fifty Years* is the kind of book Catholics will find themselves turning to again and again through the years as thorny issues arise. J. C.

Out of Due Time

WILLKIE: The Events He Was Part Of—The Ideas He Fought For. By Joseph Barnes. Simon and Schuster. \$5.

By M. A. FITZSIMONS

WENDELL Willkie, an Indiana Wilsonian Democrat, vigorously devoted the last four years of his life to the difficult task of deterring the Republican Party

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from involuntary suicide. The degree of his success and failure is discernible in the wealthy and schizoid Party of today. But only partly, for the Party's electoral appeal derives from the unpleasantness of the postwar world. Victory has been followed by a frustrated peace, a divided world and the grim test of wisdom, courage and nerves in Korea.

Opposition was a difficult role for the Republicans and in it they did not grow in statesmanship or even in a sense of responsibility. They have been the Party of negation and their negation has embraced a multitude of extremes which only the most tortuous campaign oratory could join together. Probably the greatest policy weakness of the Party arises from its fear of "me-tooism," for this fear has nullified its own bipartisan attempts and driven it to the vain pretense that there are simple and perfect solutions for problems which often admit of only one imperfect line of approach. From this blind and dangerous course Willkie did not save his Party, which branded him as the arch "me tooer." The country is the poorer for his failure, for in their newly gained power the Republicans cannot wholly disregard the rash promises which they have made during their lean years.

In this exciting and well-written volume Joseph Barnes, who accompanied Willkie on his *One World* journey, has attempted to present the principal events of Willkie's public life and his subject's views. His book is a commentary on Ickes' description of Willkie as "the barefoot boy from Wall Street." The theme, then, is the conflict of the values and virtues of earlier rural America with the demands and social adjustments required by industrialism and the complex corporate organization of American business. Under the shock of the depression the business community lost political and social initiative to the heterogeneous elements of the early New Deal. After the patchwork of reconstruction had begun, the business groups began their long war with the New Deal. But business and the Republican opposition was rarely

coherent or even plausible. This was Willkie's opportunity as it was later to be Eisenhower's opportunity. Twice in four presidential campaigns the Republican Party has hesitated to run on its record and has sought leaders outside its own ranks. Willkie, who impressively defended the interests of his Commonwealth and Southern Corporation against TVA and the Roosevelt Administration, appeared to be that then unique figure—a businessman who could talk in the political language of democracy.

The Willkie Crusade of 1940 sought to vindicate the businessman as a major promoter of the public welfare against the suspicions and rancor of American radicalism. This was a salutary effort, even though many took the crusading oath with reservations and the healthy emphasis on production tended to blur moral questions and to envisage man almost exclusively as a producer and consumer of goods.

Eventually the Willkie Crusade and the New Deal were submerged in questions of foreign policy and the war against the Axis. Willkie's opinions on this subject suggest that he probably would have been even more generous to the Soviet Union than Franklin Roosevelt was, for Willkie had in very large measure the American inability to allow for the necessary element of power politics which must enter into foreign policy.

The divisions of the Republican Party, which smothered Willkie's career in 1944, are still with us. Barnes' work is most valuable on the period up to 1940. After that Willkie's position is difficult to define and Barnes has not at all mastered the wartime background in which Willkie moved. Moreover, Barnes shares Willkie's naivete on foreign policy. It is a little surprising to find Barnes ascribing Roosevelt's turning to foreign affairs in 1937 and later as an attempt to distract attention from the failures of his domestic policy. Such a consideration may have influenced Roosevelt but surely the foreign situation demanded attention in its own right. But, all in all, the book is a valuable study of an important American.

A superb novel in his finest story-telling vein

Graham Greene

Long out of print, this early novel has all of the drama and narrative power of his better known later novels. It is primarily the story of three people—self-made industrialist Krogh; his lovely, intelligent mistress; and her black sheep twin brother, the only person that she truly loved. These three, each a worldling caught at a crucial moment in a web of his own spinning, find their destinies linked to one another in a drama of tightening tensions that is as swiftly paced as *The Third Man*, as emotionally taut as *The Heart of the Matter*. \$3.00

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Toward a Philosophy of Awareness

MAN AGAINST MASS SOCIETY. By Gabriel Marcel. Regnery. \$4.50.

By EDWARD LITTLEJOHN

GABRIEL Marcel is not easy reading. He is diffuse and unsystematic. He writes around a subject touching it at a variety of points and then passing on. And when he is finished one is not always sure just what his view is on the point in question. He has himself rejected the obligation to expound a system. "Nobody," he wrote in his Gifford lectures "... would dream of expecting from me an exposition in the deductive manner, the logical linking together of a body of essential propositions." There is here then no logical analysis mapping out in detail the territory of the subject. We must, as best we may, attend to the disordered and sometimes foggy intricacies of his probings, but our effort is continually rewarded by the lightning flashes of penetration into what Professor D. M. MacKinnon has called "the unsuspected profundities of the familiar."

Confronted with a world bent on suicide, the philosopher faces a radical choice. He cannot turn aside from the world. He cannot retire to his closed and well cared-for intellectual garden. Each of us must choose, each of us must contribute by what he thinks, by what he does, by what he is, to lessen the likelihood of catastrophe. We are living in a world which refuses to reflect. Against this refusal the philosopher must bear resolute witness to the deepest aspirations of the human soul.

There are, M. Marcel points out, an increasing number of people whose awareness is without a focus. The human creature must find his bearing in relation to other people and even to physical objects. A kind of constellation, at once material and spiritual, assembles itself around each human being. It is the dissolution of this constellation that, especially in the cities, has opened the way to the disappearance of human personality.

Thus the individual is conceived not as the image of his creator but in terms of output and function, "A sanitary file, a judicial file, a file on payment of taxes, to be completed tomorrow perhaps by an estimate of character derived from handwriting analysis or facial measurements—in what is called an 'organized' society such papers will be sufficient to decide the final disposal of the individual, without any account being taken of his family ties, his deepest attachments, his spontaneous tastes, his sense of vocation."

Against this reduction of life to what is immediately lived, M. Marcel delivers an impressive protest. For him the dominant question is how to renew the ties between man and life, how can the love of life

be renewed in beings who no longer seem to have a feeling for it. He sees little hope of recreation except in terms of very small communities. Certainly he is pessimistic about the degree to which a great administrative organization beyond the grasp of either an individual or a small group of men of goodwill, can be inspired with spiritual values. If we attend only to the conclusions of reason, he concludes, then our industrial world is doomed, and in due time a few survivors will start out again in nakedness and faith.

But though these catastrophic prophecies seem to be founded on reason, there is written in the depths of our being the obligation to reject them. We must act with a belief in miracles, counting on the work of grace.

A World Illumined with Wisdom

THE RANGE OF REASON. By Jacques Maritain. Scribner's. \$3.50.

By JAMES V. MULLANEY

THIS is a collection of seventeen essays organized under two headings, "Human Knowledge and Metaphysics" and "Faith and the Human Community." Ten of these chapters are contained in the author's *Raison et Raisons*, which was published in Paris. All but a few have appeared as separate essays in English, mostly in periodicals.

The two headings evoke the range of Maritain's major philosophical enterprises. It is impossible to read the words "Human Knowledge and Metaphysics" without recollecting those monuments of contemporary philosophy, *The Degrees of Knowledge, Science and Wisdom, Existence and the Existent*. Impossible, too, to see the phrase "Faith and the Human Community" without reliving the almost holy liberation one found in *True Humanism, Ransoming the Time, Man and the State*. In the case of M. Maritain, however, merely to reminisce is to be unjust because even at seventy he will not be intellectually complacent. There are, for example, in

his *Man and the State* and in the present volume marked advances over his political thought in any earlier work.

The Range of Reason is a remarkable collection of essays in four ways. First, there is the author's incapacity for superficiality. No matter how topical his subject may be (e.g. an address to Unesco) or how brief his treatment (e.g. a three-page discussion of artistic judgment) one is, with Maritain, in the presence of profundity, without ponderousness.

Second, by reason of the new light they brought to bear on the philosophy of this century, many of these articles had already aroused the widest attention and are now well given a permanent form. I refer, for example, to "On Knowledge Through Connaturality," "Philosophical Co-operation and Intellectual Justice," "A New Approach to God," "The Meaning of Contemporary Atheism," "The End of Machiavellianism."

Third, there is an astonishing degree of unity in these disparate papers. I do not mean merely that each bears the stamp of the same man's treatment: a unity of origin,

method and style. I mean, in addition, an objective unity of point of reference. For, without calling attention to it, M. Maritain relates all the various fields of philosophy of which he treats (epistemology, metaphysics including theology, esthetics, morals, politics, the philosophy of nature including human nature, the philosophy of faith) to a single central referent: the philosophy of culture.

Fourth, because Maritain is a philosopher there is always in his work the urgency of truth newly seen. Because he is a Thomist, there can be no "Maritainian system." But this book comes close indeed to being a summary of his thought. It is therefore a splendid introduction to his numerous philosophical publications for the young, and an ideal resume of his work for those who have been finding the authentic voice of philosophy in him for more than two decades. It is surely a tribute to the majesty of his thought that one grows to love even his English style.

Classified

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By G. B. HARRISON

THE belief that Shakespeare was brought up as a Catholic and never lost his Catholic sympathy has been gaining ground for the last thirty years. In *Shakespeare and Catholicism* the authors bring together the evidence, external and internal, and present as convincing a case as may be, unless and until some new facts are unearthed. Scholars may complain of the lack of footnotes, but the authors base their conclusions on reliable sources, and the general reader will find in this book a coherent, sane and well-argued presentation of the case.

THE ARCHEOLOGY OF WORLD RELIGIONS. By Jack Finegan. Princeton University Press. \$10.

ALTHOUGH this is a weighty tome of six hundred pages, and is rich in maps and fine photographic illustrations, Mr. Finegan can provide here only an abbreviation of the immense subject-matter.

An earlier study by this author, *Light from the Ancient Past*, concentrated upon the archeological background of the Hebrew-Christian religion, which most readers would be most interested in and best educated to read; and that was a thoroughly successful and fascinating work, with enough given about various aspects of the subject to bring in the reader. This book has to be a kind of outline. It is excellently organized, scholarly, and clear in detail, but can give no ample or full views. It will serve as a good reference book, but not very well as a book to read through for its own interest. P. B.

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